

161433Z Mar 01

CONFIDENTIAL PTQ6762

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ACTION AF-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	ACQ-00	CIAE-00	SMEC-00	INL-00	DINT-00
	DODE-00	DOEE-00	DOFE-00	SRPP-00	DS-00	EB-00	EUR-00
	FAAE-00	FBIE-00	VC-00	H-01	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00
	LAB-01	L-00	VCE-00	AC-01	NSAE-00	OIC-02	OMB-01
	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00	P-00	SP-00	SSO-00
	SS-00	TRSE-00	T-00	USIE-00	PMB-00	DSCC-00	PRM-01
	DRL-02	G-00	NFAT-00	SAS-00	SWCI-00	/009W	

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FM AMEMBASSY HARARE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8452
INFO NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY KAMPALA
AMEMBASSY KIGALI
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUANDA
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY WINDHOEK

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SIPDIS

NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR JENDAYI FRAZER

LONDON FOR CHARLES GURNEY

PARIS FOR BISA WILLIAMS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/16/11

TAGS: PREL MCAP MOPS PINR CG AO UG ZI

SUBJECT: ZIMBABWE HAPPY WITH US POSITION ON THE CONGO, MYSTIFIED BY THE BELGIANS

CLASSIFIED BY CHARGE D'AFFAIRES EARL M. IRVING FOR
REASONS 1.5 (B) AND (D).

¶1. (C) DURING A ONE-AND-A-HALF-HOUR-MEETING MARCH 16 IN HARARE, VISITING MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS CONGO EXPERT DAVID HAMADZIRIPI SHARED HIS GOVERNMENT'S VIEWS ON CERTAIN RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE CONGO. ACCORDING TO HAMADZIRIPI:

-- THE ZIMBABWEANS ARE PARTICULARLY PLEASED WITH THE U.S. ADMINISTRATION'S CURRENT STANCE ON THE CONGO. HE CITED AS THE REASON FOR HIS HAPPINESS A RECENT CONVERSATION WITH AMBASSADOR CUNNINGHAM IN NEW YORK DURING WHICH THE LATTER REPORTEDLY SAID THAT THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION WAS PREPARED TO SUPPORT MONUC DEPLOYMENT;

-- THE FRENCH INFORMED PRESIDENT MUGABE DURING THE LATTER'S RECENT TRIP TO PARIS THAT AMERICAN POSITION ON THE CONGO HAD "MOVED CLOSER" TO THEIR OWN (NFI);
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-- ZIMBABWE IS MYSTIFIED BY BELGIUM'S RECENT, AGGRESSIVE INSERTION OF ITSELF INTO THE CONGO PEACE PROCESS. HE SURMISED THAT BELGIUM FEELS A RESPONSIBILITY AS FORMER COLONIAL METROPOLE FOR THE CONGO'S SECURITY, BUT UNDERSTOOD CLEARLY THAT BRUSSELS HAS "OTHER INTERESTS" IN THE CONGO. THE ZIMBABWEANS SAW THE BELGIANS AS BEING AMBIVALENT ABOUT JOSEPH KABILA, CLOSE TO THE UNARMED OPPOSITION IN THE CONGO AND HAVING LITTLE USE FOR ANY OF THE REBEL MOVEMENTS;

-- ZIMBABWE HAS NO QUARREL OR TENSIONS WITH THE ANGOLANS OVER WHO HAS THE GREATEST INFLUENCE IN THE CONGO, ALTHOUGH HE PROFESSED TO UNDERSTAND HOW SUCH AN IMPRESSION MIGHT HAVE BEEN CREATED. HE CLAIMED THAT PRESIDENT DOS SANTOS PERSONALLY SACKED FORMER ANGOLAN ARMED FORCES CHIEF JOAO DE MATOS, WHOSE MAIN SIN WAS ENTERING INTO AN EXCESSIVELY CLOSE EMBRACE WITH THE UGANDANS. HAMADZIRIPI RECOUNTED HOW AT ONE SUMMIT IN

LUANDA THEN PRESIDENT LAURENT KABILA ASKED DOS SANTOS TO PRACTICE TRANSPARENCY WITH RESPECT TO HIS DEALINGS WITH OUTSIDERS AND EXPLAIN MATOS' INVITATION TO HIS UGANDAN COUNTERPART TO VISIT LUANDA. THE ANGOLAN PRESIDENT, WHO HAD NOT BEEN BRIEFED ON THE INITIATIVE, REMAINED SILENT. "JOAO DE MATOS BEHAVED AS IF HE WERE THE HEAD OF STATE IN WAITING," THE ZIMBABWEAN DIPLOMAT STATED, AND WHEN THE ANGOLAN PRESIDENT WENT ON A VISIT TO THE FAR EAST IN JANUARY HE MADE CERTAIN TO INCLUDE THE ALREADY FIRED FORMER GENERAL IN HIS TRAVELING PARTY;

-- RWANDA'S CLAIM THAT IT IS IN THE CONGO BECAUSE IT
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HAS SECURITY CONCERNS IS A SHAM. THE ZIMBABWEANS ARE SINCERELY READY TO WORK WITH THE RWANDANS ON IDENTIFYING AND DEALING WITH GENOCIDAIRES. WHEN PATRICK MAZIMHAKA AND RWANDA'S AMBASSADOR IN PRETORIA VISITED HARARE RECENTLY TO DISCUSS THESE MATTERS THEY MISSED AN OPPORTUNITY BY NOT PUTTING THEIR CARDS ON THE TABLE;

-- THERE IS NO REAL RESENTMENT THAT JOSEPH KABILA HAD NOT MADE AN EARLY VISIT TO HARARE, ALTHOUGH IN SOME QUARTERS THERE HAVE BEEN CALLS FOR HIM TO DO SO. HAMADZIRIPI EXPLAINED THAT THE WAY THE LEADERSHIP HERE SEES IT, KABILA SHOULD BE WORKING TO ESTABLISH THE PERCEPTION THAT HE IS HIS OWN MAN, RATHER THAN BE SEEN TO BE RUNNING TO THE ALLIES FOR EVERY LITTLE THING. THE ZIMBABWEAN DIPLOMAT DID SAY THAT KABILA HAS COME UNDER PRESSURE AT HOME TO CUT BACK ON HIS TRAVEL ABROAD AS THERE ARE PROBLEMS APLENTY AT HOME. HAMADZIRIPI ALSO OBSERVED THAT IN KATANGA THE ZIMBABWEANS WERE UNIVERSALLY WELCOMED WHEREAS IN KINSHASA THEY WERE LESS GLADLY RECEIVED;

-- ZIMBABWE AND THE ALLIES WILL BEGIN WITHDRAWING FROM THEIR POSITIONS PER THE KAMPALA AGREEMENTS AND HARARE

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SUBJECT: ZIMBABWE HAPPY WITH US POSITION ON THE CONGO, MYSTIFIED BY THE BELGIANS

SUB-PLANS WITHIN THE NEXT 24 HOURS. HE CLAIMED THAT ANY SLOWNESS IN DEPLOYING WAS ATTRIBUTABLE TO COMMUNICATIONS PROBLEMS. ZIMBABWE AND THE CONGOLESE ARMY (FAC) ARE PREPARED NOT TO REOCCUPY PWETO IF IT WOULD HELP MONUC. ZIMBABWEAN ARMY COMMANDER CONSTANTINE CHIWENGA WAS CURRENTLY IN KINSHASA NEGOTIATING THE WITHDRAWAL

MODALITIES WITH THE UN;

-- BEGINNING POSSIBLY IN APRIL, ZIMBABWE WILL START BRINGING HOME THE TROOPS IT SENT TO THE CONGO IN THE IMMEDIATE AFTERMATH OF LAURENT KABILA'S ASSASSINATION AND MORE. HE SAID THAT HIS COUNTRY'S MILITARY ASSESSED THAT IN SPITE OF CLAIMS OF MASSIVE TROOP WITHDRAWALS, UGANDA HAD ONLY BROUGHT HOME 569 MEN. "THEIRS IS A GAME, A DANGEROUS GAME," THE ZIMBABWEAN DIPLOMAT AVERRED.

12. (C) COMMENT: HAMADZIRIPI CONSISTENLY HAS BEEN OUR MOST FRANK AND BEST-INFORMED INTERLOCUTOR WHO IS EASILY CONFIDENTIAL

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ACCESSIBLE. HE IS VERY CLOSE TO FOREIGN MINISTER STANISLAUS MUDENGE AND THUS IS ABLE TO SPEAK AUTHORITATIVELY ON ZIMBABWEAN DIPLOMATIC POSITIONS. HIS POSTING TO KINSHASA IN OCTOBER 2000 HAS BEEN A REAL LOSS TO US. OF COURSE, LIKE MOST CIVIL SERVANTS HERE, HE DISPENSES REAL INFORMATION PARSIMONIOUSLY, ALWAYS PORTRAYS HIS GOVERNMENT'S POSITION IN THE MOST FAVORABLE LIGHT AND SEEKS TO INFLUENCE AS MUCH AS TO INFORM. NEVERTHELESS, WE FIND HIS ACCOUNT A CREDIBLE REFLECTION OF HIS GOVERNMENT'S THINKING ON THE ISSUES DESCRIBED.

IRVING

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